together with the daily expenditure being incurred;

(e) what will be the share of the Sri Lankan Government in the expenditure; and

(f) by when the IPKF is likely to return from Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) and (b) The strength of the IPKF in Sri Lanka is approximately 50,000. Upto 25 February, 1988, 20 officers, 30 JCOs and 333 ORs were killed and 61 officers, 82 JCOs and 1080 ORs injured in the operations. No IPKF personnel have been kidnapped.

(c) IPKF personnel killed or wounded during the operations are entitled to liberalised pensionary awards as applicable to war/battle casualties.

(d) and (e) The expenditure, direct and indirect, consists of a large number of items and exact figures are not readily available. The expenditure actually incurred will be borne in accordance with the understanding between the Governments of India and Sri Lanka.

(f) The IPKF is in Sri Lanka at the request of the Sri Lankan Government on a specific mission to implement the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement and to assure security and safety of all communities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. Any withdrawal of the IPKF should be seen in this perspective.

**IPKF in Sri Lanka**

1043. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a whether the troop strength of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka has now been increased to about 70,000;

(b) what is the total monthly expenditure on the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka;

(c) under whose overall command the IPKF is functioning in Sri Lanka; and

(d) whether the IPKF is likely to be withdrawn by April, 1988 as announced by the President of Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The expenditure, direct and indirect, consists of a large number of items, the exact figures are not readily available.

(c) The Overall Force Commander of the IPKF is the GOC-in-C, Southern Command.

(d) The IPKF is in Sri Lanka at the request of the Sri Lanka Government with the specific mission of implementing the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement and to assure the security and safety of all communities in the Northern and the Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. The duration of the IPKF's stay in Sri Lanka should be seen in this perspective.

**Exploitation of Polymetallic Nodules on the sea bed**

1044. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to exploit polymetallic nodules on the sea bed;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the financial implication in this regard?